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Newsletter

GRADUATE SCHOOL ★ USDA

Washington, D. C.

February 27, 1950

To the Faculty, Committee Members and
others associated with the Graduate School:

Self criticism may be passed off by some as a special privilege of the strong. Wisconsin University feels, however, that there's a more direct relationship between critical self-analysis and institutional vitality. Not long ago a faculty committee on functions and policies of the University issued a "searching and candid" report which seemed to emphasize University faults and shortcomings as well as the improvements which should be made. Out of "a relentless search for the best ways to serve people" the committee turned in recommendations recognized by the Milwaukee Journal as a report of "utmost importance to university regents, administrators, teachers, students, and to the legislature and people of Wisconsin... which reflects that devotion to an ideal that has kept the University of Wisconsin among all the great universities of the Nation." This lesson from Wisconsin is a strong reminder that institutions must face their problems squarely and in the confidence of those who should be helping to bear the responsibility for solution. Such an approach enlists a minimum of despair and a flood of support.

Training Needs Studied

Progress made in adequate correspondence study and extension education facilities throughout the Nation was marked by a memorandum issued recently by T. Roy Reid, Director of Personnel. Results of last year's GS survey figured prominently in his memorandum which announced that fifty-one members of the National University Extension Association offer courses in twenty-five different fields of study for which personnel have expressed interest. Mr. E. J. Peterson, (SCS) of the GS Committee on Correspondence Study and Extension Education, chaired the group making the survey which, incidentally, turned up interest in more than two hundred subjects. (For example, of 225 persons answering a questionnaire sent to 248 Extension workers in 16 States, 139 expressed a personal interest in taking correspondence courses if available). In the announcement Mr. Reid stressed that each agency of the Department is challenged by its education and training needs... pointed out that some can be met by courses available from colleges and universities throughout the United

States--that "tentative plans to meet special needs are being formulated in the Graduate School."

REA Sponsors New Courses

Two new REA sponsored courses in "Principles of Electricity" (for office and general staff personnel) and "Fundamentals of Telephony" (graduate level) are being initiated by the Department of Technology. David Askegaard, Asst. to the Chief, Management Division, REA is to teach the course in "Principles"; "Telephony" is being handled by Frederick H. Nolke, Electrical Engineer, Technical Standards Division, REA. Classes are scheduled to begin the week of February 27.

College Enrollment Up

Total college enrollment, fall of 1949, was 2,456,000 students as compared with 2,408,000 of a year earlier. Thus in spite of declining numbers of student veterans, enrollment still mounts. GS spring registration, just ended, showed enrollment holding steady, with unusual general interest evident for special, highly advanced courses.

Scan it Before You Read it

If you're behind in your reading, you may be interested in glancing at William R. Van Dersal's (SCS) ideas on the much-discussed subject. He holds that the only material which should be read (he means word for word, too) should be screened out carefully. A lot of stuff should be skimmed, filed, and read only when you need something from it; the rest should be skimmed and thrown away.

Reflections on Responsibility

A strong indictment of the "cult of irresponsibility" among college students was issued recently by President Samuel N. Stevens of Grinnell College. "In an era when discipline with responsibility on the part of citizens is one of the greater needs," he warned, "we see developing on every hand... a dangerous willingness on the part of many men and women to pass their duty on to others, who, for purposes of power, are willing to assume it." President Steven's admonition was double-edged to include institutions: "Unless we can develop in the American college student an impatience with the status quo, a passion for change for the better, and a more heightened critical judgment as to the direction in which social change moves, we who are responsible for the educational institutions of this country have failed miserably."

A Challenge to Scientists

Dr. Edmund W. Sinnott, retiring President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, pays tribute to the sweeping accomplishments of science, but asks that scientists not overlook their social responsibilities. He suggests that somehow the layman must equip himself with more general knowledge of scientific developments so that he will be in better position to make pressing decisions in the area of ec-

onomics, sociology and political science. Toward this end Dr. Sinnott urges more attention to the establishment of groups for amateurs, whether it be unpretentious nature clubs or societies essentially professional in nature. An important function of many of these groups would be to bring professional and amateur together to discuss the spirit and method as well as the accomplishments of science. Dr. Sinnott's retirement address is published in the February 10 issue of Science.

Agricultural Services to Foreign Lands

International cooperation in technical agriculture has been bolstered by the establishment of a Joint Committee on Agricultural Services to Foreign Areas, created by the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The committee is the outgrowth of a recommendation of the Association which faces many of the serious problems of shortages in manpower and resources in carrying out this country's program of international cooperation. Representing USDA are: Stanley Andrews (FAR); P. V. Cardon (ARA), T. Roy Reid (Personnel) and M. L. Wilson (Ext.)--all GS Board Members; and Foster F. Elliott (BAE) and A. Rex Johnson (FAR) both associated with the Department of Social Sciences.

Technical Cooperation

Currently apropos of USDA's participation in world-wide agricultural cooperation is the 3-month visit of Dr. Albert Moseman (ARA) of the Beltsville GS committee, Dr. Ross Moore (OFAR) and Paul Kempner (Ext. Serv.) to 12 Eastern Hemisphere countries which have asked U. S. technical cooperation. The three USDA men will help with preliminary plans for specific technical aid projects in agriculture.

GS Described Abroad

Air Bulletin, a streamlined international release of the Department of State, recently paid GS a neat tribute, tabbing it as a "non-profit, self-supporting institution... to provide continued educational opportunities for all employees of the U. S. Government (and) described by President Truman as "one of the most significant and productive instruments for better Government." Air Bulletin supplements the Department of State's Wireless Bulletin with an unusual assortment of facts about USA.

February -- Short but Eventful

For M. L. Wilson February 1 marked off a decade as Director of Extension, and brought with it Secretary Brannan's congratulations for "a very fruitful and beneficial ten year's service for American Agriculture and Extension Work... Secretary Brannan recently announced the appointment of Mr. Warren T. Murphy as field representative of the Secretary to serve in the Pacific Southwest area. Mr. Murphy, formerly with the Forest Service, was a member of GS's Committee on Correspondence Study and Extension Education... Interest in GS courses on Library Science and Techniques has been expressed by the Librarian of the Henry Ford Trade

School, Dearborn, Michigan. Information is being furnished through the D. C. chapter of the Special Libraries Association, which originally requested that GS sponsor the courses... On leave for an assignment with the Bureau of the Census is Harald C. Larsen, (BAE) of GS's Departments of Mathematics and Statistics and Social Sciences... Dr. Irwin R. Hedges, (FCA) has accepted a Paris appointment as Agricultural Economist for ECA. Dr. Hedges is a member of the Committee on Agricultural Economics of the GS Social Science Department.

Congratulations

January 1950 marked the publication date of the first issue of Photographic Engineering -- the Journal of the Society of Photographic Engineers. R. J. LeFebvre and Raymond Davis, members of the GS Committee on Photography are on the editorial staff of the new journal. The first issue carries "A Survey of Photographic Engineering" by Edward S. Cobb, GS instructor in photography. Mr. Cobb and Elbridge Purdy, both of the GS Department of Technology, are officers of the Society of Photographic Engineers.

About Books

Some Theory of Sampling, W. Edwards Deming's book which combines theory and application of modern statistical practice is due out in June. Edited by Walter A. Shewhart, the 554 page illustrated volume is being published by John Wiley and Sons. Dr. Deming heads the Departmental Committee on Mathematics and Statistics... Recently published and available on the GS shelves is Processes of Organization and Management, edited by Cathryn Seckler-Hudson. Contributing authors, in addition to the editor, include Harlow S. Person (REA) of the Departmental Committee of Public Administration.

GS in Mind?

From the 1898 Report of the Secretary (James Wilson-November 1898) comes some early thinking about post-graduate work in the Department. "After graduation at agricultural colleges, the Divisions of the Department of Agriculture might be opened in post-graduate study in special lines... We can direct the studies of a few bright young people in each Division, and when the Department requires help, as it often does, these young scientists will be available." GS, of course, was not established until 1921.

Sincerely,

Lewis H. Shubert

Director

